


# Bible Heroes







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BASIC BIBLE READER: GRADE FOUR

# BIBLE HEROES

by Ruth Shannon Odor

Illustrated by

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### FOLLOWING A TRADITION

*The new Basic Bible Readers are a beautiful, up-to-date edition of the famous Standard Bible Story Readers, by Lillie A. Faris, that were first printed in 1925. More than a million copies of the earlier editions have been added to the libraries of homes, schools, and churches in the past four decades.*

*The best of the former readers has been retained in this new series, including the favorite Bible stories that forever appeal to our children. However, all of the illustrations are completely new—drawn by noted children's artists of today.*



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## Introduction

In the public schools today, the child has practically no contact with the Bible. The home and the Bible school must provide the opportunities and the materials if the child is to learn to read the Bible with pleasure and understanding.

The *fourth-grade child* reading this book will add to his vocabulary words that he must know in order to read the Bible. The word lists beginning on page 124 make it possible for him to refer to Bible words as he uses the book, just as he learns new words from his public school reader.

The *parents* may plan family devotions around some of the stories or poems in this book, so that the child can contribute by reading aloud. Stories that are read sometimes from the Bible may at other times be read from this book. Children may be encouraged to follow up Bible-school lessons by reading the stories in their own Basic Bible Readers.

The *Bible-school teacher* will find this book particularly useful in any unit emphasizing courageous faithfulness and obedience to God. If a book is provided for each class member, class time may be used for group reading of stories. When drill is needed for recognizing and understanding certain Bible words, the teacher can choose sentences and pages where that word is used.

The *librarian* will find this a useful book for parents and teachers to borrow as they plan how to tell Bible stories or as they try to decide what religious books to buy for children. Its library use should not be limited to adults, however. Children who do not own this reader should be allowed to borrow it from the library to read at home.

Be sure your library has the complete series of Basic Bible Readers, which are designed as supplementary reading for children in grades one through four. *Bible Heroes* is fifth in this series. Other titles are Basic Bible Primer, *I Learn to Read About Jesus*, and Basic Bible Readers: Grade One, *I Read About God's Love*; Grade Two, *I Read About God's Gifts*; Grade Three, *Bible Adventures*.

## DEDICATION

This book is lovingly dedicated to those boys and girls who wish to read for themselves the wonderful stories in God's Book.



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# God Made Man

In the beginning there was God. There was nothing else. God made everything.

God made the sky and the land and the waters. He made grass and trees and flowers grow on the land. He made the sun, the moon, and the stars. He made fish and birds and animals.

Most important of all, God made man. The man was tall and strong. He could talk, and think, and love. God called the first man Adam.

God let Adam name all of the animals. Whatever Adam called an animal or a bird became its name. Adam called



the big, gray animals with long trunks “elephants.” He called the tall animals with humps on their backs “camels.” He named the bears and the pigs and the cows, the deer and the tigers and the monkeys, and every single animal and bird.

God knew that Adam would be lonely without a wife. So He made a woman. Adam called her “Eve.”

Adam and Eve lived in the most beautiful part of the world God had made. It was called the Garden of Eden. “You may eat of the fruit of any tree in the garden except one,” God said. “Do not eat of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden. If you do, you will die.”

Adam and Eve were very happy. But there was someone who did not want them to be happy. That was Satan.



One day Satan came to the garden. He said to Eve, "Has God told you not to eat any of the fruit?"

"We may eat of the fruit of all the trees except one," said Eve. "God said not to eat the fruit of the tree that grows in the middle of the garden. He said that if we did we would die."

"Oh, I don't think so," said Satan. "Why don't you go on and eat it?"

Finally Eve listened to Satan. She ate the fruit and gave some of it to Adam.

God knew what Adam and Eve had done. He was sorry that they had disobeyed Him. God said, "Because you have disobeyed me, you will have to work hard to get food to eat. You can no longer live in the garden."

So Adam and Eve had to leave the Garden of Eden. They were sorry that they had disobeyed the God who loved them so.





## Noah Builds An Ark

“Look at Noah!” the people laughed. “He is building an ark. What will he do with such a big boat here on dry land? There is no water here. Where does he think he will sail such a boat?”

The people laughed and laughed.

But Noah and his sons went right on working. God had told Noah to build this big boat called an ark. God had told him exactly how to build it. And God had told him why to build it.

“I shall send a flood,” God had said. “It will rain and rain. Water will cover everything. But you are a good man, Noah. You are the only man who is good. I want you and your family to be safe. And you will be, if you do what I tell you to do.”

Noah did what God said. He and his sons sawed and hammered, sawed and hammered. Finally they finished. The ark was bigger than almost any boat you have ever seen!

Noah put lots of food inside the ark. Then he found two of every kind of animal and bird and took them inside the ark, just as God had told him to. After Noah and his family went inside the ark, God closed the door.

It began to rain. It rained and rained and rained. It rained for forty days and forty nights. Water covered everything. The water got higher and higher. Soon it was above the trees, then above the hills, then above the mountains! But the ark floated safely on top of the water. Noah and his family and the birds and animals were safe inside.

Finally the rain stopped. The waters slowly began to go down. At last the ark rested on top of a mountain.

Was it time to leave the ark? Noah would find out.



He opened the window of the ark and sent out a raven. Then he sent out a little dove. The water was still above the trees, so the dove came back to the ark.

After a few days, Noah sent the dove out again. This time she came back with a leaf in her mouth. Noah knew that the water had gone down below the treetops.

After a few more days, Noah sent the dove out again. This time she did not come back. Noah knew that she had built a little nest somewhere in a tree.

“You can come out of the ark now,” God said.

So Noah and his family and the birds and animals came out of the ark. It was good to be on dry land again. The birds flapped their wings and flew here and there. The animals jumped and ran and pranced about.

And what do you think was the first thing Noah did? He built an altar. “Thank you, God, for taking care of us,” he prayed.

Then Noah saw the strangest thing in the sky. He saw beautiful colors of red and orange and yellow, green and blue and violet. Can you guess what it was he saw? It was a rainbow!

Then God spoke. “I have put my rainbow in the sky to help you remember my promise. I promise never to send another flood to destroy the earth.”

“God always keeps His promises,” thought Noah. “I’m glad I did what He told me to do.”

# All Things Bright and Beautiful

All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful:  
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,  
Each little bird that sings:  
He made their glowing colors,  
He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,  
The little river running by,

The sunset, and the morning  
That brightens up the sky.

The cold wind in the winter,  
The pleasant summer sun,  
The ripe fruits in the garden:  
He made them every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,  
And lips that we might tell  
How great is God Almighty,  
Who has made all things well.

—*Cecil F. Alexander*

# Joseph, a Ruler in Egypt

Joseph was a ruler in the land of Egypt. He was second to the king. But Egypt had not always been Joseph's home. He had been brought to this land years before.

You see, when Joseph was a boy, his older brothers had hated him. They had sold him to some traders, and these traders brought him to Egypt. The king of Egypt liked Joseph and made him a ruler.

Now there was more grain in Egypt than in any other land. People from other lands came to Egypt to buy grain for making bread. And Joseph sold the grain to them.

One day ten men came from a faraway land to buy grain. Joseph kept looking at the ten men. "I think I have seen these men before," he thought. "I have! I know who they are! They are my brothers!"

Joseph's brothers did not know who he was. They did not know that this ruler of Egypt was their brother, Joseph.

Joseph did not tell his brothers who he was. He wanted to see if they had changed. He wanted to see if they were better men now.

"Where do you come from?" he asked them.

"We have come from Canaan to buy food," they replied.

"I believe you are spies," said Joseph.

"No, no," said the brothers. "We are not spies. We

have come here only to buy food. We are all brothers. One other brother is dead, and our youngest brother is back home with our father.”

“Well, we shall find out whether or not you are spies,” said Joseph. He had them put into prison for three days. Then he said, “Go, and take the grain back to your home. But one of you must stay here in prison. You must come back and bring your youngest brother with you.”

Joseph had their sacks filled with grain and each man’s money put in the top of his sack. One of the brothers, Simeon, stayed, and the other nine started home. When they discovered the money in their sacks, they were scared. How did it get there? When they got home, they told their father, Jacob, all that had happened.

“You cannot take my youngest son, Benjamin,” said Jacob. “Joseph is dead. I cannot let anything happen to Benjamin.”

After a while all the grain was gone, and there was no more food. “Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain,” said Jacob.

“But the man said that unless we brought Benjamin he would not sell us any grain,” said one of the brothers.

“Please let us take Benjamin,” said another brother. “We’ll take good care of him.”

“All right,” said Jacob. “Take the ruler a present. Take double money. Take back the money that was in



your sacks and take the money to buy more grain.”

Once again the brothers went to Egypt. Joseph was glad that they had come back and that they had brought Benjamin. Still he was not ready to tell them who he was.

Joseph invited them to his home to eat. Simeon, the brother who had stayed in prison, was brought out to them. The brothers were afraid. They had never been in the house of such a great man before.

“Fill these men’s sacks with grain,” Joseph told his servant. “Put each man’s money in the top of his sack. And put my silver cup in Benjamin’s sack.”

The next morning the brothers left for home. They had not gone very far when Joseph’s servant came riding after them. “The ruler of our land was good to you, and

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you have stolen both his money and his silver cup,” said the servant.

“What are you talking about?” asked the brothers.  
“We didn’t steal anything.”

“If I find the silver cup in any man’s sack of grain, he will have to go back with me,” said the servant.

When they looked into the sacks, they found the silver cup in Benjamin’s sack. All the brothers went back to the city with Joseph’s servant.

“We did not steal,” they said to Joseph. “You must not put Benjamin in prison. We promised our father that we would take good care of him.”

Now Joseph knew for sure that his brothers had changed. They loved Benjamin. They would never do to

Benjamin what they had done to him. They were sorry for what they had done so long ago.

Joseph could not wait another minute to tell them who he was. "I am Joseph," he said. "I am your brother."

The brothers were so surprised that they did not know what to say.

"Do not worry about what you did to me so long ago," said Joseph. "God has taken care of me. God has used me to work for Him. Hurry back home and bring my father. Bring your families and live here in Egypt with me."

Joseph threw his arms around his brothers and hugged and kissed them. How happy they all were!

The brothers hurried home to tell their father the good news. Jacob was the happiest father you ever saw. He and his sons moved to Egypt to live with Joseph.

Joseph, the great ruler of Egypt, was happy. He was glad he had forgiven his brothers. He thanked God for all that God had done for him.



# Moses Builds the Tabernacle

“Moses is calling all the people together. Let’s go and find out what he has to tell us.” The people gathered to listen to their leader, Moses.

“We have no special place to worship God,” said Moses. “God wants us to build one. It will be a tent-like building called a tabernacle. We shall need things for making it. Bring your gold and silver and brass. Bring blue and purple and red cloth, animal skins, and wood. We’ll use these to build the tabernacle.”

The people wanted to build the tabernacle for God. They gave the very best things that they had. Each man and woman and boy and girl brought something. Some brought gold bracelets, rings, earrings, and money. Some brought silver and brass, animal skins, and wood. The women made cloth of blue and purple and red.

Each day there were more and more gifts for the tabernacle. Soon there were more than enough.

“You may stop bringing gifts,” said Moses. “Now it is time to begin building.”

They made beautiful curtains from the cloth and the skins. They made boards from the wood. They melted the gold and silver jewelry and money, using some of it to cover the wood and some of it to make beautiful things



for the inside of the tabernacle.

As the people worked, Moses told them just how God had said to make the tent-like building.

At last the tabernacle was finished. It was beautiful! The people were glad they had built it.

God sent down a cloud that covered the tabernacle, and the tabernacle was filled with the glory of the Lord. God was pleased that Moses and the people had built a tabernacle for worshiping Him.

## *Joshua Leads the Way*

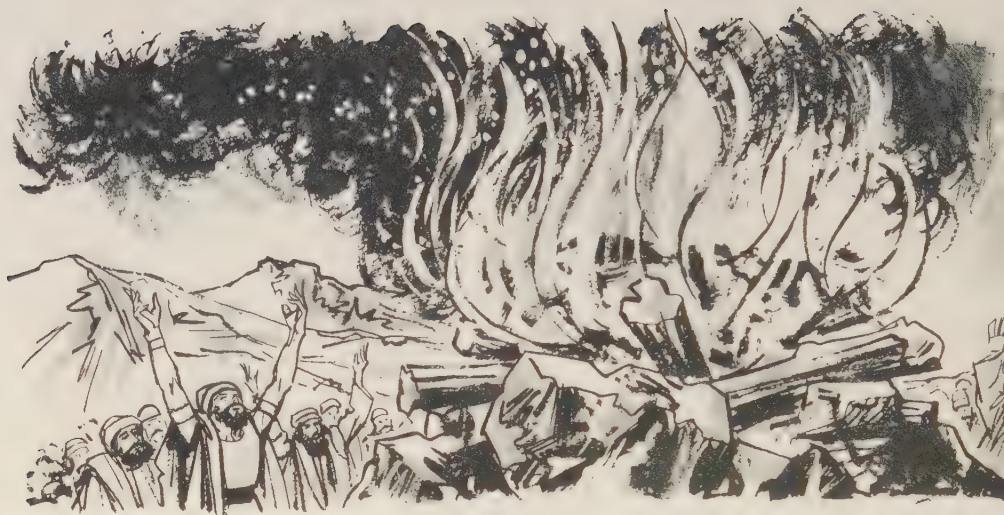
For years God's people had been traveling to Canaan, the land God had promised to give them. At last they came to the land. But before Canaan was theirs, they had to fight for it.

They had fought two big battles and won. Now what was next? Another battle?

No, before they went on farther into the land, there was something very important they must do. Joshua, their leader, remembered that God had told Moses what the people should do as soon as they were in the new land. They were to stop and worship God. And God had said exactly where and how. Joshua told the people what to do.

They gathered in the valley between two mountains. One mountain was called Mount Gerizim, and the other mountain was called Mount Ebal.

On Mount Ebal, Joshua and some of the men built an altar of stones. They picked up rough stones from the ground and stacked them up to make an altar. God had said that they were to use rough stones like these and not stones that had been smoothed and polished by men. After the altar had been built, the people worshiped God before it. They thanked God for helping them to win the battles. They asked Him to help them during the days ahead.



Then Joshua did something else God had said to do. He and some of the men stacked up stones and spread plaster on them. Joshua began to write on the plaster. What do you suppose he wrote? He wrote the Ten Commandments, the rules God had given the people to live by. All the people could see what was written on the plaster. It helped them to remember what God had done for them. It helped them to remember how God wanted them to live. And in the years to come anyone who passed by that way would be able to read God's rules written on the plaster of the stones.

There was one more important thing God wanted Joshua to do that day, and that was to read God's words to the people.

The huge crowd of people was divided into two groups. Half of them stood in the valley near Mount Gerizim, and



the other half stood in the valley near Mount Ebal.

As Joshua read the words of God, the people said, "Amen." Joshua read every single word. The people listened. The mothers and fathers listened. The boys and girls, and even the visitors, listened to the words of God.

Not a sound could be heard in the valley between the two mountains except the voice of Joshua as he read the words of God.

Joshua read about the good things that God would do for the people if they obeyed Him. Joshua read about the terrible things that would happen to the people if they did not obey God.

When the reading of God's word was over, the people left. But they did not soon forget that day, the day when they stopped between the two mountains to think about God and to thank Him.

## Ruth Finds a New Home

Ruth had to decide. Should she stay in her own country or should she go to the country of Judah with her mother-in-law? Ruth's husband was dead. She always had loved Naomi, the mother of her husband. Years ago Naomi and her husband and two sons had come to Ruth's country to live because there was little food in their own country. One of the sons had married Ruth, and the other son had married a girl named Orpah. Now both the sons and their father were dead. Naomi wanted to go back to her own country. There was plenty of food in Judah now.

Ruth decided to go with her mother-in-law.

"Orpah has decided to stay here," said Naomi. "You go back to your home too, Ruth."

But Ruth said, "Do not beg me to stay here. Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your people shall be my people; your God shall be my God."

When Naomi saw that Ruth had made up her mind, she said no more.

The two women walked for days and days. At last they came to Bethlehem, Naomi's old home. Ruth must have wondered what it would be like in this strange new land. She must have been a little bit afraid. But she loved Naomi, and she would love Naomi's people. And here the people

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worshiped the one true God. Ruth wanted to worship Him, too.

Ruth and Naomi lived together in a little house in Bethlehem. It was time for the barley harvest. Each day Ruth went out to the fields and gathered grain so that she and Naomi could have food to eat.

In the barley field, Ruth met a man named Boaz. Later Ruth and Boaz were married. They had a son named Obed. And Ruth became the great-grandmother of David.

# The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

What was an angel doing sitting there under the oak tree? The young man, Gideon, could not imagine. Gideon was threshing wheat by hand in a place where the Midianites could not find him. The Midianites were enemies who had taken over the country of Israel.

"The Lord is with you," the angel said to Gideon.

"If He is with us, then why doesn't He help us drive the Midianites out of our land?" asked Gideon.

"He will," answered the angel. "And He has chosen you to do it."

"Me?" said Gideon. "How can I do it? My family is poor and I am the least in my father's house."

"God will be with you, and you will drive out the Midianites as one man," said the angel.

Then Gideon asked God to show him a sign so that he could know this was really true. He put some meat and bread on a rock. The angel touched it with his staff and fire came out of the rock and burned it up.

Then the angel left. Gideon could hardly believe that God had sent an angel from heaven to speak to him.

Later God told Gideon just what to do. But still Gideon was afraid. Once more he asked for a sign. He said, "I will put out this fleece of wool, and if there is dew on it

but all the ground around it is dry, I will know that you will help me to save my country."

The next morning Gideon got up early and went out to get the fleece. It was so wet that he squeezed a bowlful of water out of it.

"Please do not be angry with me," he said to God. "But let me put the fleece out once more, and this time let it be dry and let there be dew on the ground around it."

And God did so that night, for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground. Now Gideon was sure that God would help him.

Gideon had sent out messengers to tell the people to join his army, and they came from all over the land. They set up their tents and made camp near a stream of water. In the valley north of them was the huge camp of the Midianites.

"You have too many men," God said to Gideon. "With so many men, the people will not know that it was my power and not theirs that won. Tell all those who are afraid to go back home."

"All of you who are afraid may go back home," Gideon announced to the army. And twenty-two thousand men went home. Now he had ten thousand men left.

"That is still too many," God said. "Bring the men down to the water, and I'll tell you which ones to choose."

So Gideon brought the men down to the stream of water

to get a drink. Some of the men got down on their knees and put their heads down to the water to drink. Others scooped up the water in their hands and lapped it with their tongues, just as a dog does.

“Choose the men who lapped with their tongues,” God said to Gideon. So Gideon put those men in one group, and there were three hundred of them.

How could this little army of only three hundred men win a battle against the thousands and thousands of Midianites? It did not seem possible. But with God anything is possible.

Gideon divided the men into three companies of one hundred each. He gave each man a trumpet and a pitcher with a torch in it. What strange things to fight with!

“Watch me and do what I do,” said Gideon. “When we come to the enemy camp, we’ll blow our trumpets and shout, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.”

In the darkness, Gideon and his men surrounded the enemy camp. When Gideon gave the signal, they blew their trumpets, broke their pitchers, and held up the flaming torches. “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon,” they shouted.

The men in the Midianite camp heard the trumpets and the shouting. They saw the lights. They thought they were being attacked by a huge army. They ran as fast as they could to get away. They were so confused that they started



fighting one another. And the people of Israel went after them and drove them out of the land.

God had helped His people drive out the enemy. Now they could live in peace because of the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

# Saul Becomes the King

Long ago there lived a young man named Saul. Saul was tall and strong and handsome. One day his father's donkeys wandered away and were lost. Saul's father sent Saul and a servant to find them. They hunted and hunted, but they could not find the donkeys. On and on they walked until they were far away from home.

"Let's give up and go back home," said Saul.

But the servant said, "The prophet of God lives in that city over there. Let's go and ask him where the donkeys are. He knows everything, and he can tell us."

So they went to the city to find the prophet of God.

The prophet of God was Samuel. The day before, God had said to him, "Tomorrow about this time I will send a young man to you. He is the one I have chosen to be the king over my people."

You see, God's people, the Israelites, did not have a king. They did not need a king, for God was their ruler. But they kept begging God, "Give us a king. The other people have kings. We want a king, too."

So God was going to give the people what they asked for. He was going to give them a king, and He had chosen Saul.

But as yet Saul did not know this. Only Samuel knew. When Samuel saw Saul coming toward him, God said,



“This is the one I told you about. This is the man I have chosen to rule my people.”

“Can you tell me where the prophet lives?” Saul asked Samuel. Saul did not know who Samuel was.

“I am the prophet,” said Samuel. “Come with me and eat with me. Don’t worry about the donkeys you are looking for, for they have been found.”

Saul was surprised that Samuel, the prophet of God, would talk this way to him. “I am not an important person.

My family is not important," he said. "Why do you talk this way to me?"

Samuel was not ready to tell Saul yet. He took Saul and the servant with him to eat. He had Saul sit in the best place at the table and told the cook to give him the best of the meat.

That evening and early the next morning Samuel talked to Saul. Then he said, "Now I must send you home." As they left, he told the servant to walk on ahead. Then Samuel poured oil on Saul's head, kissed him, and said, "This is because God has chosen you to be the king."

Later, Samuel called all the people of Israel together at a certain place. "You have asked God for a king," he reminded them. Then he told the different tribes to march by. He asked for the tribe to which Saul belonged. Then he asked for Saul's family. Then he asked for Saul. But Saul was not there.

Where could Saul be? They looked for him, but they could not find him anywhere. Then God told them that he was hiding among the baggage. There they found him.

They brought him before Samuel. He stood tall and straight and strong. He was taller than anyone else.

Samuel said to all the people, "See him whom God has chosen to be king? There is none like him among all the people."

And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

# DAVID the KING

King Saul was no longer a good king. He disobeyed God, who had made him king, and decided that his own ways were best.

God was sorry that Saul was the king. He sent Samuel to the home of Jesse and told him to anoint one of Jesse's sons as king. The son was David, a shepherd boy.

It was years after this that David actually became king. He grew to be a man. He lived in King Saul's palace part of the time because he was a friend of Saul's son, Jonathan, and because Saul liked to hear him play the harp. David was a soldier and he fought many battles for King Saul.

Then one day Saul and Jonathan were killed in a battle. Although Saul often had been unkind to David, David was sorry to hear that Saul and Jonathan were dead.

The people of Judah, the southern part of the country where God's people lived, came to David and anointed him king.

Later, the people of Israel, the northern part of the country, wanted David to be their king, too. Now David was king over the whole land. He moved to the city of Jerusalem, and there he built a palace to live in. He had a big family and many servants.

In the land next to David's country lived the Philis-



tines. The Philistines always had been enemies of God's people. They made war against David, but God helped David and his army to drive them out of the land.

Something was missing in the city of Jerusalem. The tabernacle, the tent for worshiping God, was there, but the ark of the covenant was not in it. The ark of the covenant was the big beautiful box in which were kept the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments written on them. The ark was very special, for it reminded the people of God's love and care.

David and his men brought the ark to Jerusalem. As they marched into the city with the ark before them, crowds of people gathered to watch. There was the sound



of trumpets and of shouting. People played harps and other musical instruments. They sang praises to God. It was a lot like a parade, only it was a parade praising God for His love and care.

David led the way, playing his harp and singing. He leaped and jumped to show his joy and praise to God.

When the ark was placed inside the tabernacle, David made an offering to God. Then he blessed the people in God's name.

In the years that followed, David did not always do right. But David always turned back to God, and was sorry for the wrong he had done. God forgave him and helped him to be a good king over His people.

# Solomon Builds the Temple

Solomon, king of Israel, was the wisest and the richest man in all the world. One day he wrote a letter to his friend, Hiram, the king of Tyre. "King Hiram," he said, "you know that David, my father, could not build the temple because he fought in wars. But now there is peace. I want to build a house of God. God told my father that his son would build it. I need your help. I need wood from the tall cedar trees that grow up in Lebanon. No men know how to cut timber as well as the men of your country. If you'll have them cut the cedars for me, I'll send some of my men to help and I'll pay you."

King Hiram was glad to help. The workmen cut down the tall cedar trees. Then they cut and shaped the wood and sent it down to Solomon.

Solomon needed lots of stone, too. He sent men to Lebanon to cut out and shape and polish huge marble stones.

The workmen built the temple on a hill in the city of Jerusalem. If you had been there watching the builders work, you would have noticed something very strange. There was no sound of hammer or ax or any iron tool. All this work had been done before the wood and stone were brought in. The men had cut each stone so carefully that it

fit exactly into place. They had shaped the wood so carefully that each piece fit exactly into its place. The temple was to be a perfect building, for it was the house of God. God himself had given the plans to David. King Solomon had flowers and trees carved on the walls inside the build-



ing. He had the inside, even the floor, covered with gold.

After seven years of work, the temple was built. It stood high on the hill, and you could see it for miles around, all white and gold, shining in the sunlight. It was the most magnificent building you can imagine. It was the house of God.

But the temple was not complete until the ark of the covenant was there. On the day Solomon had it placed in the temple, people came from all over the land. After the ark was placed in the special room Solomon had made for it, a cloud filled the building and the glory of God filled the house of God. God wanted His people to know that He was there.

King Solomon spoke to the people. He told them all about how God had planned the building of the temple. And he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who spoke unto David my father."

Then he knelt down on his knees and spread his hands out toward heaven. "O Jehovah, God of Israel, there is no God like Thee," he prayed. "You keep your promises and show loving-kindness to those who love you with all their hearts. You have kept your promise to David.

"We know that you are everywhere, not just in this house we have built. Yet great as you are, you hear our prayers. Hear us when we pray to you. Hear in heaven, your dwelling-place, and forgive."

# Elijah Dares the Prophets of Baal



“Is it you, you troublemaker of Israel?” asked wicked King Ahab as he met Elijah on the road.

“I am not the one who causes trouble in the land of Israel,” said Elijah, the prophet of God. “It is you. You

have turned away from God and you worship Baal. Tell all the people of Israel and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred other false prophets to meet me on Mount Carmel.”

So a great crowd gathered on Mount Carmel. Elijah said to the people, “How long will you keep going back and forth between two sides? If God is really God, then be on His side. If the idol Baal is god, then be on his side. Choose one or the other.” The people said nothing.

Then Elijah dared the prophets of Baal. He said, “I am the only prophet on God’s side, but there are four hundred and fifty prophets on Baal’s side. We’ll make two altars and put wood on them and meat for a sacrifice. But we’ll not light a fire on the altars. You can pray to your god, and I’ll pray to my God. And whichever one answers by sending down fire is the true God.”

“It is well spoken,” said the people.

The prophets of Baal were first. They made an altar and put a sacrifice on it. Then they said, “O Baal, hear us.” But nothing happened.

“O Baal, hear us! Hear us!” they shouted over and over, over and over, from morning until noon. But nothing happened.

At noon, Elijah said, “Your god must be gone on a trip or taking a nap. Cry louder.”

They cried louder and louder, jumped up and down,

and even cut themselves with knives. Nothing happened!

By the middle of the afternoon, it was Elijah's turn. "Come closer," he said to the people. Then he repaired an old, broken-down altar to God that was there on the mountain. He stacked up twelve large stones, put wood on the top, and then meat for an offering. Around the altar he dug a ditch.

"Fill four jars with water and pour it on the meat and the wood," he said to some of the people. And they did.

"Do it a second time," he said. They did.

"Do it a third time," he said. They did it again. All of the altar was soaked with water.

Then Elijah filled the ditch around the altar with water. He wanted everyone to know that what was about to happen was not a trick.

Then quietly Elijah began to pray to God, the Father in heaven. "O God," he said, "let it be known today that you are God, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things because you told me to. Hear me, that my people may know that you are God."

Elijah had no sooner finished praying than fire fell from heaven. It burned up the sacrifice and the wood and the stones of the altar. It even licked up all of the water in the ditch around the altar.

The people fell on their faces on the ground. "The Lord, He is the God!" they said. "The Lord, He is the God!"

# Elisha and a Little Boy

Elisha was a prophet of God. As he worked for God, he often traveled from one city to another. Whenever he went through the city of Shunem, a certain woman and her husband invited him to their home to eat and to rest.

One day Elisha was surprised to find that they had built an extra room on the house for him. "Now whenever you come by, you will have your own room to sleep in," they told him.

Elisha wanted to do something to show his thanks. So he asked God to give the woman a son.

How happy the woman and her husband were with their baby boy. When the boy was big enough, he liked to follow his father out to the fields.

One day while they were out in the field, the boy got sick. "Father, my head hurts," he said. "Oh, my head hurts."

"Take the boy home to his mother," the father told his servant. The mother held the boy in her lap. She did everything she knew to do, but the boy died. She carried him upstairs and laid him on the bed in Elisha's room.

"I must go to Elisha," she thought. "Elisha can help me."

As she rode near the place where Elisha lived, he saw

her coming. "There comes the woman from Shunem," he said to his servant, Gehazi. "Run to meet her and ask her if everything is all right."

Gehazi hurried to meet the woman. He asked her if everything was all right. But she wasn't going to tell him what was wrong. She had to tell Elisha. Only Elisha could help.

When she came to Elisha's house, she jumped off the donkey and ran and knelt down before Elisha.



Gehazi started to tell her to go away, but Elisha said, "Can't you see that she is in great trouble?"

Then the woman told Elisha that her son was dead.

Elisha turned to Gehazi. "Go and lay my staff on the child," he said. "Hurry." And Gehazi hurried off.

But the woman wanted Elisha himself to go. "I will not leave until you come with me," she begged.

So Elisha and the woman hurried off toward her home. On the way they met Gehazi coming back. He had laid Elisha's staff on the child but nothing had happened. "The child has not moved," he said.

When they came to the woman's house, Elisha went up the stairs into his room and closed the door. He prayed to God. Then he went over to where the boy lay and put his body against the boy's body. The child began to feel warm. Elisha got up and walked back and forth across the room. Once more he lay down and put his body against the boy's body. This time the boy sneezed. "Kerchoo!" He sneezed seven times, then he opened his eyes!

"Call the woman," Elisha said to Gehazi.

The woman came to the door. "Here, take your son," said Elisha. How happy the woman was! She ran to Elisha, knelt down on the floor, and bowed before him. She thanked him for asking God to make her son alive.

Then she picked up the boy in her arms and carried him down the stairs.

# Three Men in a Fiery Furnace

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a huge idol made out of gold and set up in a certain place. The golden idol was ninety feet tall, as tall as a seven- or eight-story building. Nebuchadnezzar commanded that when a signal was given with musical instruments, everyone should bow down and worship the idol. Anyone who did not would be thrown into the fiery furnace.

Three men did not worship the idol. They were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These three men were Hebrews who had been brought to Babylon as captives. But the king had made them leaders in the land. They loved and worshiped God, and God had said that His people were never to worship an idol.

When someone told the king that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had not bowed down before the golden idol, he was angry. He had the three men brought before him.

“Was there some reason why you did not worship my idol?” he asked. “I’ll give you another chance. When you hear the sound of music, bow down and worship the idol. If you do not, I shall have you thrown into the furnace.”

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not afraid. “King Nebuchadnezzar,” they said, “if you do this to us, our God is able to save us from the burning, fiery furnace.



But even if He does not, we will not worship your gods nor worship the golden idol."

This made the king so angry that he ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was. "Tie these men up," he said, "and throw them into the furnace."

The three men were tied up, with all of their clothes on, and thrown into the burning, fiery furnace.

The furnace was so hot that it burned up the men who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into it. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not burned up. They were not burned at all. God took care of them.

Nebuchadnezzar went to look into the furnace, and he could not believe what he saw. "Didn't we throw three men into the fire?" he asked. "But I see four men walking around in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt. And the fourth one is like the Son of God."

Then the king went to the door of the furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the most high God, come out."

The three men came out of the furnace, and everyone gathered around to look at them. The fire had not burned them at all! Not a hair on their heads was burned. Their clothes were not burned. They did not even smell of smoke.

"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and has taken care of these men who trusted in Him and would not disobey Him," said the king. "I make a law that if any people in any land say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they shall be punished."

Then the king made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego even more important rulers in the land.

# Nehemiah Builds the Wall



In the middle of the night Nehemiah went out to look at the wall of the city of Jerusalem. The wall was broken down in many places. Some of the gates had been burned.

Nehemiah was sad as he looked at the wall. He remembered how the people had been taken away as captives and the city had been destroyed by an enemy country. Then after many years, the people had been allowed to come back. They had rebuilt the temple and some of the houses. But the wall around the city had not been rebuilt. Enemies could easily come right in.

Nehemiah had been in Jerusalem for three days. No one knew he was there. He had come from the faraway land of Persia. And he had a plan for helping his people.

The next morning he called the people together. "You see how the wall is torn down," he said. "Let us build up the wall again."

Then Nehemiah told them about himself. He said, "I was a cupbearer to the king of Persia. One day the king asked me why I was so sad. I told him that men had come from here and told me about the city. When the king asked me what I wanted to do about it, I prayed to God in heaven. Then I asked the king if I could come here and help build back the wall. The king has let me come."

"Let us rise up and build," said the people.

They got ready for the big job ahead of them. They sharpened their tools and gathered the building materials they would need.

When their enemies, who lived nearby, heard this, they laughed at them. "What do you think you are doing?" they said.

The people answered, "God will help us rebuild the wall around our city."

They worked and worked. Nehemiah was their leader. First they built the wall halfway up all the way around. This would keep the enemies out until they could finish the other half of the wall.



When they heard that their enemies were planning to attack, they prayed to God. Then they had men with spears and swords keep watch. The enemy did not come. They went back to work on the wall.

Nehemiah had half of the men hold their spears and keep watch while the other half worked. And every builder kept his sword by his side. But the enemy did not come.

After fifty-two days, the wall was finished. It stood strong and firm all around the city of Jerusalem.



## Job Is Tested

In the land of Uz lived a man named Job. Job had seven sons and three daughters. He had thousands of sheep and camels, thousands of oxen and donkeys. Job was a good man who always obeyed God.

Satan saw how good Job was. He did not like it. He said to God, "Job obeys you because you have been good



to him. He has a big family and much cattle. If these were taken away, Job would not love and obey you.”

God said, “Then I put all Job has in your power.”

So Satan had Job’s sons and daughters and all of his cattle killed.

Job was sad. Now he had nothing. But he did not turn away from God.

Satan would not give up.

“If something happened to Job himself, he would turn away from you,” Satan said to God.

“Do whatever you want with him, but do not take his life,” God said to Satan.

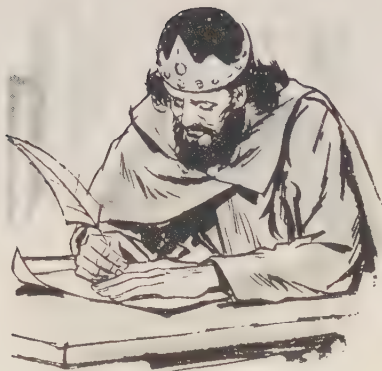
So Satan made Job have sores all over his body from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. Job felt terrible, but he would not turn away from God.

Three of Job’s friends came to visit him. They talked and talked, but they only made Job feel worse.

Job had been tested and had won. No matter what happened to him, he would still love and obey God.

God made the sores go away. He gave Job twice as much as he had had before. Job’s family and friends came from everywhere to visit him. They brought him money and gold rings. Again he had thousands and thousands of sheep and camels, oxen and donkeys. God even gave him more sons and daughters. Job had far, far more than he had ever had before.

# WISE ADVICE FROM PROVERBS



The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

For the Lord giveth wisdom:

Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

My son, keep thy father's commandment,  
And forsake not the law of thy mother.

A wise son heareth his father's instruction.

A soft answer turneth away wrath:  
But grievous words stir up anger.



# Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
And the firmament sheweth his handywork.  
Day unto day uttereth speech,  
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.  
There is no speech nor language,  
Where their voice is not heard.  
Their line is gone out through all the  
earth,  
And their words to the end of the world.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the  
sun,

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his  
chamber,

And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

And there is nothing hid from the heat  
thereof.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting  
the soul:

The testimony of the Lord is sure,  
Making wise the simple.

Let the words of my mouth,  
And the meditation of my heart,  
Be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord,  
My strength, and my redeemer.



## Isaiah Tells of Christ

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there lived a man named Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet. He was God's messenger. He told the people what God wanted them to do. He also told them what would happen years and years ahead. Isaiah preached to the people, and he wrote a book of the Bible named "Isaiah." Here are

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some of the words he wrote in that book. See if you can find out what they mean. They are about something that would happen years and years after Isaiah lived.

“Behold, a virgin shall . . . bear a son,  
And shall call his name Immanuel.”

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
And the government shall be upon his shoulder:  
And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,  
The mighty God, The everlasting Father,  
The Prince of Peace.”

“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into  
the high mountain;  
O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy  
voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid;  
Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!”

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd:  
He shall gather the lambs with his arm.”

These are some of the most beautiful and most important words you will ever read. Do you know what they mean? Whom is Isaiah talking about? Read the next story in this book, and it will help you to find the answer.

# An Angel Comes to Mary

One day the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a certain home in the town of Nazareth. He went to see a virgin named Mary. The angel said to her, "God is with you. Blessed are you among women."

When Mary saw the angel she was afraid. And when he spoke to her, she wondered why he was saying this to her.

"Do not be afraid, Mary," said the angel. "God is pleased with you. You will have a son and will call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. He shall be a king forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

"But how can this be?" asked Mary.

The angel answered, "God will come to you and His power will overshadow you. Your child will be called the Son of God. With God nothing is impossible."

"I want to serve God," said Mary. "Let it happen as you have said."

Then the angel Gabriel was gone.

Mary wanted to tell her cousin, Elisabeth, what had happened. So she hurried across the hills to Elisabeth's home to tell her the amazing news that the angel had brought!



Did the angel's words come true? Yes, you know the rest of the story, don't you? Mary was married to a man named Joseph, and they lived in Nazareth. Then they had to make a trip to Bethlehem. Because there was no room in the inn, they slept in the stable. And that night Mary's Son was born. Mary remembered the angel's words, and she named Him Jesus. And He was the Son of God!

(Now do you know whom Isaiah was talking about? Of course, he was talking about Jesus.)

# Jesus Comes to John the Baptist

When Isaiah was writing about Jesus' coming to earth, he told about someone else, too. He said that a man would be heard preaching out in the wilderness. The man would say, "Get ready for the coming of the Lord." Years later this came true.

The man was John. He was the son of Elisabeth, Mary's cousin. And he was born a few months before Jesus was. When John grew to be a man, he did what God told him to do. He went out into the wilderness, a place along the Jordan River where no one lived. And he began to preach what God told him to preach.

"Jesus, God's Son, is coming," said John. "Get ready. Change your ways. Be sorry for your sins."

When people heard about this man preaching out by the Jordan River, they went to hear him. Every day crowds came. And every day the crowds were bigger and bigger.

The tax collectors, the soldiers, and many others asked John, "What shall we do?" John told them how to obey God.

Some of the people were sorry for their sins, and John baptized them in the river. Because John baptized people, he was called John the Baptizer, or John the Baptist.

The leaders heard about this man who was preaching and baptizing down by the Jordan River. They decided to



go to the Jordan River and find out who he was.

“Who are you?” the leaders asked John. “Are you the Christ, the Son of God?”

“No, I am not the Christ,” said John.

“Well, who are you then?” they asked.

“I am the one whom the prophet Isaiah wrote about,” John answered. “I am the one preaching in the wilderness and saying, ‘Get ready for the coming of the Lord.’”

“There is one among you whom you do not know yet,”

said John. "He is greater than I am. I am not even good enough to unfasten His shoes."

Then one day Jesus came down to the Jordan River. He asked John to baptize Him.

John said, "I need to be baptized by you. Why do you come to me?"

"Do as I say," said Jesus, "for God wants you to baptize me."

So John baptized Jesus in the water of the Jordan River. As Jesus came up out of the water, a strange and wonderful thing happened. The Spirit of God came down from heaven on Him like a dove. And a voice spoke from heaven. It was the voice of God. God said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Now John knew for sure that Jesus was God's Son.

The next day when John saw Jesus coming, he said, "He is the Son of God. He has come to take away the sins of the world. This is the one I was talking about. This is the one I meant when I said that one would come who is greater than I am."

"I saw the Spirit of God come down on Him like a dove," John told the people. "The God who told me to baptize with water told me that the one on whom I saw the Spirit coming down would be the one He had promised to send. I saw this happen, and I know that this is the Son of God."



John knew that his work was to get people ready for Jesus' coming, to introduce Jesus to them. Now Jesus was ready to begin His work. Jesus, not John, was the important one. John sent his own followers to be followers of Jesus.

# Stories of Jesus

Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;  
Things I would ask Him to tell me if He were here;  
Scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,  
Stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

First let me hear how the children stood round His knee;  
And I shall fancy His blessing resting on me:  
Words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,  
All in the lovelight of Jesus' face.

Into the city I'd follow the children's band,  
Waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;  
One of His heralds, yes, I would sing  
Loudest hosannas! Jesus is King!

Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea,  
Tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee!  
And how the Master, ready and kind,  
Chided the billows, and hushed the wind.

—*William H. Parker*



## Jesus Preaches in the Synagogue

Jesus went back to Nazareth, the town where He had lived when He was a boy. On the Sabbath Day, He went to the synagogue as He always did.

Jesus stood up in the synagogue to read the Scripture. He was given the scroll of Isaiah. When He had opened the scroll, He found a certain place. He read words that told about himself. This is what Jesus read that day to the people in the synagogue in Nazareth.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor;

“He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

“To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

When Jesus had finished reading, He closed the scroll, gave it to the man who took care of the scrolls, and sat down. (In those days they sat down to preach or to teach.)

“This day this Scripture is come true,” said Jesus.

The people looked at one another in surprise. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they said. They had seen Jesus grow up as a boy there in Nazareth. They had heard that He did many miracles in other cities. They wondered about Him, but they could not believe that He was the one Isaiah had written about.

Jesus knew what they were thinking. He knew that they did not believe that He was the Christ. “No prophet is accepted in his own country,” He said.

The people were angry with Jesus. “Let’s throw Him out of the city!” they said. They took Jesus out to the edge of the city, and they were ready to throw Him down the hill. But Jesus passed right through the middle of them, and went on His way. He went on to preach in cities where people would believe that He was the Christ.



## Matthew Follows Jesus

Matthew was a tax collector. He had a place by the side of the road where people stopped to pay taxes.

The people did not like to have to pay taxes. Most of the tax collectors were dishonest and kept part of the money for themselves. So the people did not like tax collectors at all.

Since Matthew was a tax collector, probably most people did not like him either. But there was someone who liked Matthew. There was someone who knew that Matthew was a good man and that he would be a good and faithful worker. And that someone was Jesus.

Matthew heard all of the news as people passed by and as they stopped beside his place to talk. He must have heard about Jesus. He must have heard that Jesus was the one whom God had promised to send. He must have heard that Jesus was a great teacher and that He made sick people well.

One day Jesus came by the place where Matthew was collecting taxes. He said to Matthew, "Follow me."

Matthew left everything and followed Jesus. He quit his job. He was happy that Jesus had chosen him to be one of His workers. He wanted to work for Jesus more than anything else in all the world.

Matthew had a big dinner at his home and invited Jesus. He invited his tax collector friends, too, for he wanted them to meet Jesus.

Jesus was glad to come to Matthew's house. They sat down at the table to eat. Matthew had had a wonderful meal prepared.

Some of the people saw Jesus going to Matthew's house. They saw Matthew's friends going in, too. "Jesus is eating with those tax collectors and sinners!" they said. They

thought Jesus was doing a terrible thing. “Why does Jesus eat with tax collectors and sinners?” they asked.

When Jesus heard what they were saying, He said to them, “People who are well do not need a doctor. But those who are sick do. I did not come to tell the good people to repent. I came to tell sinners to repent.”

Jesus wanted Matthew’s friends to know Him so that they would change their ways, and begin to do right.

Matthew was one of Jesus’ disciples all the rest of the time Jesus was on the earth. Even after Jesus went back to heaven, Matthew still worked for Him. He wrote one of the books of the Bible; God helped him to know what to write. Matthew’s book is called “Matthew.” It is the first book of the New Testament. And what do you suppose Matthew’s book is about? Of course! It is all about Jesus.





## A Centurion's Faith

A centurion was an officer in the Roman army. The Roman government ruled the land where Jesus lived and had sent Roman soldiers to oversee the land. One centurion was sent to the city of Capernaum.

This centurion had a servant whom he loved very much. One day the servant got sick. He kept getting sicker and

sicker. It looked as if he were going to die. If only there were something the centurion could do so his servant would not die! Then he heard of Jesus!

“Jesus can make sick people well,” they told him.

“Then I shall ask this Jesus to heal my servant,” said the centurion. And he sent some men to find Jesus.

The men hurried to the place where Jesus was. “The centurion has sent us to ask you to come and make his servant well,” they said to Jesus. “We hope you will help this centurion, for he is a good man, and he loves our country. He has even built a synagogue for us.”

Jesus went with the men to the centurion’s home. As they came near the house, the centurion sent some of his friends with a message for Jesus. “Lord, do not trouble yourself, I am not good enough for you to be in my home. I am not even good enough to come to you. But if you will just say a word, my servant will be well. I am a man who has soldiers working for me. I order my soldiers to go or to come, or to do a certain thing, and they do it.”

Jesus was pleased that the centurion believed in Him. He turned to the crowd of people following Him and said, “I have not found such great faith as this man’s. Not even my own people, the Jews, have such great faith in me.”

The centurion’s friends went back to the house. And when they got there, they found the sick servant well again. Jesus had made him well!



## Jesus Tells About the Sower

One day Jesus was sitting beside the sea. A few people came by and stopped to hear Him teach. More and more people kept coming. Soon there was a big crowd. There was such a big crowd that many of the people could not even see Jesus. So Jesus got into a boat near the shore. Now everyone could see Him and hear Him. He taught from the boat. And the people stood on the shore and listened.

Jesus wanted the people to understand many things about God and God's Word. Often He told stories to help them understand. These stories were called "parables."

This is one parable that Jesus taught the people from the boat that day.

A farmer went out to the field to sow seed. As he scattered it across the field, it fell in different places. Some of the seed fell by the side of the road. Before long some birds came and ate it up.

Some seed fell on the rocky places where there was little soil. The plants came up, but they did not have enough soil to grow roots in. When the hot sun shone on them, they dried up.

Some of the seed fell among thorny weeds. So many tall, thorny weeds grew around the plants that they kept the plants from getting any sunlight or any food from the soil. So they died.

Some of the seed fell on good soil. The plants came up and grew tall and green and healthy. They had much grain on them.

Later Jesus told what the parable meant.

Jesus said that some people hear God's Word, but do not understand it. Then the devil comes along and they listen to him and turn away from God. They are like the soil along the roadside.

Some people are like the rocky soil. They are glad to hear God's Word, and they obey it for a while. But when trouble comes and it is hard to do what is right, they give up and no longer obey God.



Some people are like the soil where the thorny weeds grew. They obey God for a while, but then they care more about riches and the things of this world. Before long they forget about God.

Some people are like the good soil. They hear the Word of God, understand it, and obey it. They do much work for Jesus.

# Jesus Makes a Girl Live Again

Once there lived a girl. The Bible does not tell us her name. It does tell us that she was twelve years old and that her father's name was Jairus. Jairus was an important man, a ruler of the synagogue.

One day the girl got sick. She had to go to bed. Her mother and father were worried about her. They did all they could to make her well. But she got sicker and sicker. No medicine would make her well. She only got worse and worse.

"She is going to die," said her father and mother. "What shall we do?"

Then someone said, "Jesus could make her well."

Jairus had heard of Jesus. He had heard that Jesus could make sick people well.

"I shall ask Jesus to make our daughter well," Jairus said to his wife. And he hurried off to find Jesus.

When Jairus found Jesus, many people crowded around Him. There were sick people who wanted Him to make them well, and people who wanted Him to come and heal their friends or relatives.

Jairus went up to Jesus and knelt down before Him. "My little daughter is almost dead," he said. "Please come and lay your hands on her so she will be well."



Jesus went with Jairus. The great crowd of people followed them.

They walked and walked. Then they saw some men from Jairus' house coming to meet them. "Your daughter is dead," the men said to Jairus. "Do not bother Jesus any more."

As soon as Jesus heard what the men said, He said to Jairus, "Be not afraid. Only believe."

And they kept on walking.

When they came to the house, Jesus told the crowd not to come any farther. He took only three of His disciples with Him. They were Peter, James, and John.

As they went into the house, they saw Jairus' friends and neighbors crying because the girl was dead. "Why do you cry?" said Jesus. "The girl is not dead. She is only asleep."

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed the people. "That's what you think."

But Jesus paid no attention to them. He knew that the girl was dead, but He also knew that He could awaken her to life again. He and His three helpers and Jairus and his wife went into the room where the girl lay.

Jesus took the girl's hand. He said, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

There was silence in the room. Everyone waited to see what would happen.

The girl opened her eyes. She looked up at Jesus. She looked at her mother and father. Then she sat up. She put her feet on the floor. She stood up and walked across the room to her mother and father.

"Give her something to eat," said Jesus.

The girl was alive and well! Jesus had made her live again. Everyone was amazed at this wonderful miracle.

How thankful Jairus and his wife were to Jesus for making their daughter live.



## Jesus Walks on the Water

Jesus had been preaching to a great crowd of people near the Sea of Galilee. It was getting late and the people were hungry. But they were far from home and they had no food. So Jesus fed them with five small loaves and two fish from a little boy's lunch. When Jesus blessed the bread and the fish, there was enough for all the people to have as much as they wanted to eat.

Now it was time to go home. Jesus told His disciples

to get into their boat and sail across to the other side of the sea while He sent the people home.

After all of the people were gone, Jesus went to a mountain to pray alone.

Evening came. It was getting dark. The boat with Jesus' disciples in it was out in the middle of the sea. And Jesus was alone on the land.

Jesus saw His disciples rowing as hard as they could to get to shore. But a strong wind kept blowing them back the other way. They rowed and rowed. But they just could not row against such a strong wind.

In the night Jesus went out to His disciples. He walked on top of the water! He walked near the boat.

When the disciples saw someone walking on the water, they were afraid. They did not know that this was Jesus. "It is a ghost!" they shouted. "It is a ghost!"

Then they heard a voice. "Be of good cheer," said Jesus. "It is I. Be not afraid."

"It is Jesus!" said the disciples. "It is Jesus!"

Then Jesus walked up to the boat and climbed into it. The very second that He got into the boat, the wind stopped blowing! It was calm and still out on the sea.

The disciples were amazed. Even though they had seen Jesus do many miracles, they were still amazed at His wonderful power. He had power even over the wind and the sea.



## The Transfiguration

One day Jesus asked three of His disciples to go with Him. They were Peter, James, and John. Peter, James, and John loved Jesus very much. He often asked these three men to go with Him. On this day, they climbed up on a high mountain.

On top of that mountain a strange and wonderful thing happened. The disciples kept looking at Jesus, for He began to look different. His face shone as bright as the sun! And His clothes were as white as a bright light!

Then the disciples saw Moses and Elijah standing there



on the mountain beside Jesus! They were talking to Jesus.

Do you remember who Moses and Elijah were? They were men who had lived many years before. Moses had been the leader of God's people when God gave them the Ten Commandments. Elijah had been a prophet. He was the prophet God took to heaven in a whirlwind.

First God had given the people laws to live by. Then He had sent prophets to tell the people His messages. But now He had sent His very own Son, Jesus.

Peter, James, and John were amazed at this strange and wonderful thing. They felt very close to God there on top of that mountain.

Peter wanted to keep this wonderful feeling. He said

to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you say so, we shall make three tents—one for you and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Then all of us can stay here for a while.”

Jesus did not have time to answer Peter, for before Peter had finished speaking, a bright cloud came over them. A voice spoke from the cloud: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.”

It was the voice of God!

The disciples were afraid. They fell on the ground on their faces.

Jesus came over to them and touched them. “Arise, and do not be afraid,” He said.

When the disciples looked up, no one was there except Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain, Jesus said, “Do not tell anyone about what happened today until after I have risen from the dead.”

Jesus’ disciples had believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Now they knew for sure. God himself had told them. And God had said that they were to listen to Jesus and follow only Him.

The thing that happened on that mountaintop that day is called the “transfiguration.” That is a big word, isn’t it? Not many boys and girls know what it means. But you do.



## Jesus Teaches Forgiveness

“How often shall I forgive someone who does wrong to me?” Peter asked Jesus. “Should I forgive him 7 times?”

“Not just 7 times,” said Jesus, but 70 times 7.”

How much is 70 times 7? It is 490. That’s a lot of times to forgive a person, isn’t it? Jesus meant that we should never stop forgiving someone who asks us to.

To help Peter understand this, Jesus told this story:

A king was checking up on the money his servants owed him. One servant owed him a lot of money. "But I do not have the money to pay you back now," said the servant.

"Then sell this man, his wife, his children, and all he has, to pay his debt," the king commanded.

The servant begged the king, "Oh, please give me time and I'll pay you back all I owe you."

The king felt sorry for the man. "All right," he said. "We'll just forget about the money you owe me."

This made the servant happy. But do you know what he did? He met another servant who owed him just a little bit of money. He grabbed him by the throat and said, "Pay me what you owe me."

The other servant fell down at his feet and begged, "Please give me time. I'll pay back all I owe you."

But the servant would not listen. He had the other servant put in prison.

When some of the other servants heard what had happened, they told the king. The king sent for the wicked servant. "Oh, you wicked servant," he said, "I forgave you of your debt because you asked me to. Should you not have forgiven the man who owed you?" The king was angry. He had the man taken away and punished.

Jesus said, "So shall my heavenly Father do this to you, if you do not forgive other people."

# Jesus and Lazarus

In the town of Bethany lived two sisters, Mary and Martha, and their brother, Lazarus. Whenever Jesus was near Bethany, He came to visit them. He loved these dear friends very much, and they loved Him.

One day Mary and Martha were sad. Lazarus was very sick. They sent someone to tell Jesus.

When Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." His disciples did not understand what He meant.

Jesus waited two days before He started out for Bethany. "Our friend, Lazarus, is asleep," said Jesus. "But I go that I may wake him from his sleep."

"If he can sleep, that is good," said the disciples.

But that is not what Jesus meant, for He said, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there. Because of what will happen, you will believe."

In Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days. Many friends and neighbors had come to stay with Mary and Martha. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she ran to meet Him. "Lord," she said, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now whatever you ask, God will do."

"Your brother will rise again," said Jesus.

“Yes, I know,” said Martha. “I know he will when everyone does at the last day.”

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, even though he is dead, shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never really die. Do you believe that?”

“Yes, Lord,” said Martha. “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

Then Martha went to find Mary. She said to Mary, “The Master is here, and calls for you.”

Mary hurried out to meet Jesus. She knelt down at His feet. “Lord,” she said, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Then she began to cry.

When Jesus saw her and those who had come with her crying, He was very troubled.

“Where did you bury Lazarus?” He asked.

“Come and see,” they said.

Jesus was so sad that He cried too. As they saw the tears, they said, “See how much He loved Lazarus.”

Jesus came to the tomb where Lazarus’ body lay. The tomb was a cave with a big stone before the door.

“Take away the stone,” said Jesus.

Everyone was amazed that He should say such a thing!

They took away the stone. Jesus looked up toward heaven and prayed. “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. And I know that you hear me always. But



because of the great crowd of people standing here, I said it, that they may believe that you sent me.”

Then Jesus called loudly, “Lazarus, come forth.”

And Lazarus walked out of the tomb!

How happy Mary and Martha were to see their brother alive again. How thankful they were to Jesus for making him live. Many people believed Jesus was God’s Son because of what they saw that day.

"This do in  
remembrance  
of me"



# The Last Supper

Jesus and His disciples had eaten supper together. Jesus knew He would soon be leaving, and He wanted those who loved Him to have some way to remember Him.

Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke the bread into pieces, and gave it to the disciples. "Take and eat," He said. "This is my body which is given for you. Do this to remember me."

Then Jesus took a cup of the fruit of the vine (grapes) and gave thanks, and gave it to the disciples to drink. "This is my blood which is poured out for many," He said. "Do this to remember me."

The disciples did not really understand what Jesus meant until after He had died on the cross and risen from the dead.

After Jesus had returned to heaven and the church had begun, His disciples and the other Christians met together. On the first day of the week they ate bread and drank the fruit of the vine and remembered Jesus.

And still today Christians all over the world have the Lord's Supper. They eat of the bread and drink of the fruit of the grapevine. They remember Jesus' words, "Do this to remember me." They remember His love, His death on the cross, His resurrection. They have not forgotten Him.

# Jesus Comforts His Disciples

After Jesus had made Lazarus alive again, the wicked men who were jealous of Jesus were angrier than ever. "What are we going to do?" they said. "This man does many miracles. If we leave Him alone, everybody will believe in Him." So they began to plan to have Jesus killed.

Jesus knew what they were doing. He knew that He was going to die on the cross, but not because of these wicked men. Because Jesus loves everyone, He would die for all the sins of all the people in the world. And He would rise from the dead. Then after a while He would go back to heaven to live with God.

One night Jesus and His disciples met in an upstairs room to have a last supper together. Jesus loved these men who had worked with Him during the past years. He was sorry to tell them that He would have to leave, but He knew that He must tell them. "I am going to be with you only a little while longer," He said. Then He said:

"A new commandment I give unto you,

"That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Simon Peter said, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow me now, but later you shall follow me."

"Let not your heart be troubled," said Jesus. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."

Then Thomas asked, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . .

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; . . .

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Jesus also prayed to God, His heavenly Father, for His disciples. Then He prayed for all those who would believe

in Him. Part of His prayer was for us today. This is that part:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

“That they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”



## Just As I Am

Just as I am, young, strong and free,  
To be the best that I can be  
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,  
Lord of my life, I come.

I would live ever in the light,  
I would work ever for the right,  
I would serve Thee with all my might,  
Therefore, to Thee I come.

Just as I am, Thine own to be,  
Friend of the young, who lovest me,  
To consecrate myself to Thee,  
O Jesus Christ, I come.

—*Marianne Hearn*

## Darkness in Gethsemane

It was night. All was darkness in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus and His disciples had eaten the last supper together. Now they had come to Gethsemane to pray.

“Sit here while I go over there and pray,” Jesus said to the disciples. Taking Peter, James, and John with Him, He walked on farther into the garden. Jesus was very sad and troubled. “My soul is very sad, even unto death,” He said. “Stay here and be near me.”

Then He went on a little farther and knelt down to pray. “My father,” prayed Jesus. “If there is any other way, do not let me have to suffer and die. But let your will, not mine, be done.”

Then Jesus went over to the place where Peter, James, and John were sitting. They were asleep. “What! Could you not stay awake with me for one hour?” Jesus asked Peter.

Jesus went away and prayed again. “My Father,” He said, “if this cannot pass away except I do it, then your will be done.” When He had finished praying, He found the three disciples asleep again.

A third time, He left them and prayed. He prayed the same words He had prayed before.

When Jesus came back to the sleeping disciples this

time, He said, "Sleep on now. For the hour is here."

Then Jesus said, "Get up, and let us go, for he who will betray me is coming."

One of Jesus' twelve disciples was not in Gethsemane that night. That one was Judas. Judas had gone to the wicked men who hated Jesus and told them that He would



help them take Jesus. So Judas, one of Jesus' own disciples, was the one who betrayed Him.

Jesus had not even finished speaking when Judas came. A crowd of people carrying lanterns and swords was with him. Judas had told these wicked men, "Watch and see which man I kiss. He will be the one. Take Him."

Judas walked up to Jesus and said, "Hello, Master," and kissed Him on the cheek.

"Friend, do what you came here to do," said Jesus.

Then they came and grabbed Jesus. One of Jesus' disciples took out his sword and was ready to fight for Jesus. But Jesus told them not to fight. "I could ask God and He would send me an army of angels. But then how would the Scripture come true?"

The disciples were scared, and they ran. The wicked men took Jesus away. All was darkness in Gethsemane.



# ISAIAH TELLS OF JESUS' DEATH



Isaiah was a prophet, a messenger from God. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, Isaiah preached and wrote about Jesus' birth. (Do you remember what Isaiah said? Read page 59 again.) In another part of his book, Isaiah wrote about Jesus' death. How could Isaiah know about Jesus when Jesus had not even come to earth yet? God told him; that was the only way he could have known. God told Isaiah what to preach and write. In his book, Isaiah wrote a poem that tells about Jesus' death on the cross. Here are parts of the poem for you to read:

“He is despised and rejected of men;  
A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:  
And we hid as it were our faces from him;  
He was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

“But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities:



The chastisement of our peace was upon him;  
And with his stripes we are healed."

"All we like sheep have gone astray;  
We have turned every one to his own way;  
And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity  
of us all."

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
Yet he opened not his mouth:  
He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,  
And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb,  
So he openeth not his mouth."

# Jesus Dies

It happened as Isaiah had said it would. Jesus was brought before the rulers of the land. But He had done nothing wrong. They beat His back with a whip. They put a crown of thorns on His head. They made fun of Him. But He did not say a word.

They took Jesus before Pilate, the governor. Pilate said, "This man has done nothing wrong." But the people shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

In those days the worst criminals were not hanged or shot or sent to the electric chair. They were nailed to a cross made of wood and were left to die.

The people brought Jesus to a hill outside Jerusalem called Golgotha. They gave Him vinegar to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink it. They crucified Him on a cross.

Over His head they put a sign, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Two robbers were crucified with Jesus. One was on a cross on the left side of Him, and the other was on a cross on the right side.

Some of the people looked up at Jesus and said, "Why



don't you save yourself? If you are the Son of God, why don't you come down from the cross?"

Jesus could have come down from the cross. He could do anything, because He is the Son of God. But someone had to die for the sins of all the people. And that was why Jesus had come to earth. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Mary, Jesus' mother, was there. His disciples and His friends were there. They were very sad. They thought that they would never see Him again.



Then there was darkness over all the land. Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then again He cried out in a loud voice. And then Jesus died.

The sky was black!

The earth shook!

The rocks were torn apart!

The people were afraid. Was this man whom they had crucified really the Son of God?

A Roman soldier who had helped crucify Jesus said, "It is true. This was the Son of God!"

# Jesus Lives Again

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, some women who were friends of Jesus went to His tomb. After Jesus had died on the cross, a rich man and some other friends had taken His body down from the cross. They had wrapped it carefully in fine cloth and laid it in a new cave-like tomb. Then they had rolled a big stone in front of the door.

Now the women were bringing sweet-smelling spices to put on the body of Jesus. When they came to the tomb, the stone was rolled away from the door. And on it sat an angel. He was bright as lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow.

The women were afraid.

“Do not be afraid,” said the angel. “I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, as He said He would. Come, see the place where He lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples He is risen from the dead. He has gone before you into Galilee. You will see Him there.”

The women were scared but very happy. Jesus was alive! They ran as fast as they could to tell the disciples the good news. How wonderful it would be to see Jesus again. It was almost too good to be true.



On the way they met Jesus! He spoke to them, and they knelt down and worshiped Him.

“Do not be afraid,” said Jesus. “Go and tell my friends to come to Galilee. There they shall see me.”

That same day two men were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. As they walked along, they talked about Jesus’ death on the cross and about the news that the women had brought. They did not know whether to believe that Jesus was really alive or not.

Jesus came near and walked along with them. But they did not know that this was Jesus.

“What are you talking about that makes you sad?” Jesus asked.

One of the men looked at Jesus strangely and said, “You must be a stranger in Jerusalem if you haven’t heard anything about the things that have happened there the last few days.”

“What things?” asked Jesus.

“Jesus of Nazareth, one mighty in deeds and words before God and the people, was crucified,” they said. “But we had thought that He was the Christ. Today certain women said that they went to His tomb early this morning, and it was empty. They said that an angel told them that He is alive. Others went to the tomb and it was just as the women had said, but they didn’t see Him.”

Jesus was sorry that they could not believe He had risen. He told them all the Scriptures that told about Him. They still did not know that He was Jesus.

By now they had come to the town of Emmaus. The two men asked Jesus to stop and eat and rest with them. While they were at the table, Jesus took bread, thanked God for it, and gave it to them to eat. Suddenly they knew Him. He was Jesus! It was true. He was alive.

And suddenly He was gone. The two men hurried back to Jerusalem to tell His disciples what had happened.



Later the eleven disciples went to Galilee to a mountain where Jesus had told them to meet Him. Jesus came to them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him. He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."



## Peter Preaches to Thousands

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His disciples to wait in the city of Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came to them. Then He said that they should go out and preach the gospel in the city of Jerusalem, in the country all around Jerusalem, and even in the faraway parts of the world.

The disciples did wait in Jerusalem. They spent the time praying.

Then, one day, when they were all together in one place, there was a sound like a mighty, rushing wind. And



over the heads of the disciples were tongues of fire. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, which Jesus had promised to send.

The disciples began to preach. There were thousands of people in Jerusalem that day. They had come from many different countries to worship in the temple. They spoke many different languages, but each person there could understand in his own language!

The people were amazed that everyone could understand the disciples' words. But some of them said, "Oh, those men are drunk."

Peter stood up with the other eleven disciples and said, "You men of Judea, and all of you here in Jerusalem, listen

to me. These men are not drunk. But what is happening today is what the prophet of God said would happen." Peter told them what the prophet had said about these wonderful things that would happen.

Then Peter began to preach about Jesus. He said:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

Then Peter told the people, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

The people were sorry with all their hearts. "What shall we do?" they asked Peter and the other disciples.

Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The people who believed what Peter said were baptized. On that one day three thousand people were baptized!

The Holy Spirit had come, just as Jesus had promised. The church had begun.



## Stephen Is Stoned

Stephen preached about Jesus. He told people how to become Christians. He helped those who were Christians.

Some men were angry with Stephen because they could not show that what he preached was wrong. So they paid men to lie and say that Stephen had spoken against God.

This made a lot of people angry with Stephen. One day they grabbed him and took him before the rulers. The men who had been paid to lie said that Stephen had spoken against God. The men looked at Stephen. His face was like the face of an angel! “Are these things they say about you true?” They asked.

Stephen stood up and spoke to the men. He told about God’s people of long ago—Abraham and Moses and Joseph. He told about how God had promised His people so much, but many of them had disobeyed Him. “And you people,” he said, “you will not receive the Holy Spirit. You do just as the people who lived before you did. They hurt and killed God’s prophets. Now you have killed His Son Jesus.”

Oh, how angry this made the rulers!

Then Stephen looked up into heaven and said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”

This made Stephen’s enemies more angry than ever. They shouted and ran toward him. They grabbed him and dragged him out of the city. And there they threw stones at him. The stones cut and bruised Stephen. But the angry people were not going to stop until Stephen was dead. Before Stephen died he prayed, “Lord Jesus, take me to you.” And then he said, “Lord, forgive them of this sin.”

Stephen was not afraid to speak up for Jesus. He was even willing to die for Him.

## Peter Preaches to Cornelius

One day about noon Peter went up on the roof top to pray. He was staying at the home of Simon, who lived beside the sea. Peter was hungry and wanted something to eat. While he was waiting for the meal to be ready, he had a vision. He saw the sky open, and a big thing like a sheet held together at the four corners was let down to earth. In it were all kinds of animals and birds. A voice said, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat."

"No, Lord," said Peter. "I have never eaten anything that is not clean." (The Jews were not to eat certain animals.)

"Do not call unclean what God calls clean," said the voice.

This happened three times, and then the thing was taken up into the sky.

While Peter was wondering what this meant, three men had come to the door downstairs and were asking for a man named Peter.

God said to Peter, "Three men are here looking for you. Go with them, for I have sent them."

Peter went downstairs, and three men stood there. "I am the man you are looking for," said Peter. "Why have you come?"



The men said, "Cornelius, the centurion, a good man who loves God, sent us. God sent an angel to tell him to send here for you and to listen to what you would tell him."

Peter invited the men in to rest and to spend the night. The next morning he and some of his friends went with them to the city where Cornelius lived.

Now Cornelius was a Roman soldier. He was a rich man and an important man. But he was a Gentile. (A Gentile is anyone who is not a Jew.) And Jews were not

to go into the home of a Gentile. But because of the vision and of what God had said, Peter knew that he should go to Cornelius' house.

Cornelius was waiting for them. He had his family and friends there. As Peter walked in the door, Cornelius knelt down to worship him. But Peter took his hand and lifted him up. "Stand up," he said. "I am only a man like anyone else."

Then they went into the room where Cornelius' family and friends were waiting.

"You know that a Jew is not supposed to be in the homes of people of another nation," said Peter. "But God has shown me that I should not call any man unclean. That is why I came when you sent for me. Now, why have you sent for me?"

Cornelius said, "Four days ago while I was praying, an angel stood before me. He said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayers and knows about the money you give. Send for a man named Peter. He is staying in the home of Simon, who lives by the sea. Then he will tell you what to do.' As soon as the angel was gone, I sent for you. It was kind of you to come. We are here to listen to the things God has told you to say."

"Now I know that God does not have favorites," said Peter. "He wants men of all nations to believe in Him. He has sent Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. I do not need

to tell you what has happened lately in the land of the Jews. You have heard of Jesus of Nazareth. God gave Him the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing the sick, for God was with Him. We saw with our own eyes the things He did.

“Then they killed Him; they hanged Him on a cross. But on the third day God raised Him from the dead. Many people saw Him after He had risen. We saw Him and ate and drank with Him. And He told us to preach that He is the Son of God and that whoever believes in Him can have their sins forgiven.”

As Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came to those who were listening. The Jews who had come with Peter were amazed that God would send His Spirit to Gentiles. They had thought that only the Jews could become Christians.

Peter said, “Can anyone forbid water, that these people should not be baptized who have been given the Holy Spirit just as we have?”

Cornelius, his family, and his friends were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. After that they asked Peter to stay with them for a while.

Cornelius and his family and friends were the first Gentiles to become Christians.

Now Peter knew that Jesus had died for all people of all nations.

# Paul Preaches to a King

Paul was a prisoner. The Jews who did not believe in Jesus had Paul taken prisoner. Paul had asked to be taken to Caesar in Rome. Caesar was the highest ruler in the land. Festus, the governor, was waiting for a chance to send Paul on a ship to Rome.

One day two people came to visit Festus. They were King Agrippa and his queen. After they had been there several days, Festus told King Agrippa about Paul.

"I'd like to hear what this Paul has to say," said King Agrippa.

"All right," said Festus. "Tomorrow you shall hear him."

The next day all the important people met in a big room. King Agrippa and the queen came in and were seated. Then Festus told the soldiers to bring in the prisoner, Paul.

Paul stood before the king. Chains were on his hands. But he was not afraid.

"The Jews think this man should be killed," Festus said, "but I cannot see that he has done anything wrong. I am going to send him to Caesar in Rome. But I don't know what to say he has done. So I have brought him before you, King Agrippa. See what you think about him."

King Agrippa looked at Paul. "You may speak for yourself," he said.

Paul said, "I am happy, King Agrippa, to answer before you why the Jews have made me a prisoner. For I know that you know the Jews and their ways.

"All the Jews know the way I have lived since I was a boy. At first I worked against Jesus of Nazareth. In Jerusalem I had those who believed Jesus is the Christ put in prison and killed.

"One day while I was on my way to another city, I saw a light from heaven brighter than the sun. I fell down on the ground. A voice said, 'Saul, Saul, why do you work against me?'

" 'Who are you, Lord?' I asked.

" 'I am Jesus whom you are working against,' He said. 'But stand up, for I have chosen you to work for me. I want you to preach to the Gentiles about me.'

"And, King Agrippa, I obeyed Him," said Paul. "I taught men to change their ways and turn to God. For these causes the Jews had me taken prisoner and want to kill me. But God helps me, and even today I tell others about Jesus Christ. What the prophets said would happen has happened. God's Son came, and died, and rose again on the first day of the week."

Festus could not understand this. "Paul, you are crazy," he said.



“I am not crazy,” said Paul. “What I say is true. The king knows this. He has heard about these things.”

Then Paul turned to King Agrippa. “King Agrippa,” he said, “do you believe the prophets? I know you believe.”

Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost make me want to be a Christian.”

And Paul said, “I wish that all of you were Christians as I am.”

# John Sees the Heavenly Home

John was the youngest of Jesus' apostles, and he lived longer than any of the others. When he was an old, old man, he was a prisoner on an island. There he wrote a book. It is the last book of the Bible, and it is called Revelation. God told John what to write. God let John see what heaven would be like so he could write it down for us to read.

John wrote, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. I saw the holy city. And I heard a voice from the throne saying, 'God himself shall be with men and be their God. He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more crying, or death, or pain.' "

He who sat on the throne said to John, "Behold, I make all things new. Write, for these words are true. I am the beginning and the end. I will give to him who is thirsty the water of life freely. He who lives for me shall have these things. I will be his God and he shall be my son.

"But those who do not believe in me, those who do wrong . . . shall be in the lake that burns with fire."

Then an angel showed John the heavenly home. It was a beautiful city, as bright as a jewel. The city was made of pure gold. There was a high, beautiful wall around it.



The foundations of the wall were made of beautiful jewels. The gates were made of pearl. And the streets were made of gold.

There was no night there. And there was no need for the sun or the moon, for the glory of God gave the light.

And only those who belong to Jesus will live in that beautiful city. Their names are written in Jesus' book of life.

"Behold, I come quickly," said Jesus. "Blessed is he who obeys the words of this book. Those who do my commandments may come into the city. Outside the city are those who do wicked things, and they may not come in.

"The Spirit and the church say, 'Come.' And he who hears, let him say, 'Come.' And he who is thirsty, let him come. He who will, let him take of the water of life freely.

"If any man adds to this book or takes away from this book, he shall be punished."

Then Jesus told John that He would come again. And John said, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Do you remember what Jesus told His disciples about heaven before He died on the cross? He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." That is where Jesus is today—preparing the heavenly home for those who love and obey Him.

Do you know the very last words that John wrote in Revelation, the last book of the Bible? These are the words: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."



## When Morning Gilds the Skies

When morning gilds the skies,  
My heart, awaking, cries,  
    May Jesus Christ be praised!

Alike at work and prayer,  
To Jesus I repair:  
    May Jesus Christ be praised!

—*Tr. Edward Caswall*

# New Basic Bible Vocabulary

Standard's Basic Bible Reader, Grade Four: *Bible Heroes*, follows the Basic Bible Reader, Grade Three: *Bible Adventures*. Others in the series of five readers are the Primer, *I Learn to Read About Jesus*; Grade One, *I Read About God's Love*; and Grade Two, *I Read About God's Gifts*.

*Bible Heroes* contains a total of 1275 different words. Of this number, 1049 are used in public school basic reading texts, 103 are former new Bible words not yet introduced in secular texts, and 123 are introduced as new Bible words. A new word is considered a Bible word if it is in Scripture quotations or if it is necessary to a Bible story.

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61	. . .		Thomas		holden
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74	. . .		astray	123	<i>Poem</i>
75	. . .		oppressed		
76	. . .		afflicted		
77	Jairus		slaughter		

# Cumulative Basic Bible Vocabulary

## Through Grade Four

The following list includes the words introduced as new Bible words in the Basic Bible Primer and in the Basic Bible Readers, Grades One through Four. Words now common in public school fourth-grade readers are omitted.

Aaron	Baptist	chastisement	Ecclesiastes
Abednego	baptized	Christ	Eden
abide	barley	Christian	Egypt
Abishai	bear	Comforter	Egyptian
Abner	begotten	commit	Eli
Abraham	beloved	converting	Elijah
acknowledge	Belshazzar	Cornelius	Elisha
acquainted	Benjamin	Counsellor	Elisabeth
Adam	Bethany	courts	Emmaus
adultery	Bethel	courtyard	esteemed
afflicted	Bethesda	covenant	Esther
Agrippa	Bethlehem	covet	Ethiopia
Ahab	Bible	criminal	eunuch
Ai	blessed	crucify	Eve
Ajalon	blood	daily	everlasting
altar	Boaz	Daniel	exalteth
Amen	bacelets	David	Ezra
Ananias	bridegroom	debt	false
Anna		debtor	fasting
Andrew	Caesar	defeat	Festus
angel	Caleb	despised	fiery
anoint	Canaan	destruction	firmament
apostle	Capernaum	determinate	fleece
arise	captive	devil	flesh
ark	caravan	disciple	folly
art	Carmel	doth	forbid
astray	cedar	dove	foreknowledge
	centurion	dwelling-place	forsake
Baal	chamber	Ebal	foundation
Babylon	chariot		

frankincense	Herod	Judaea	Nehemiah
furnace	hinder	Judah	Nineveh
	Hiram	Judas	Noah
Gabriel	holden		
Galilee	holy	knowledge	Obed
Gaza	honour		obtain
Gehazi	hosanna	Lazarus	oppressed
generation		Lebanon	Orpah
Genesis	idol	lest	
Gentile	image	locust	palm
Gerizim	Immanuel	Lord	parable
Gethsemane	inherit	Lot	Paul
Gibeon	iniquities		peacock
Gideon	innkeeper	manger	perish
glorify	instruction	manna	Persia
glory	instruments	mansion	Peter
God	Isaiah	Martha	Philippi
Golgotha	Israel	Mary	Philistines
Goliath	ivory	Matthew	Pilate
gospel		meditation	pillar
grace	Jacob	Mene	plaster
graven	Jairus	merciful	poison
grievous	James	mercy	polished
grief	jealous	Meshach	preach
guiltless	Jehovah	Midianites	presence
	Jericho	midst	present
hallowed	Jerusalem	miracle	prodigal
Haman	Jesse	Miriam	prophet
handywork	Jesus	Mizpeh	Proverbs
Hannah	Jew	Mordecai	
harp	Joash	Moses	raven
hast	Job	myrrh	redeemer
hath	John		rejected
haughty	Jonah	Naomi	rejoice
heal	Jonathan	nation	remission
heaven	Jordan	Nazareth	repent
Hebrew	Joseph	Nebuchadnezzar	reproach
Hebron	Joshua		resurrection

Revelation	Siloam	talebearer	unto
righteousness	Simeon	Tarsus	Upharsin
Roman	Simon	tax	Uz
Rome	sin	Tekel	
Ruth	Sinai	temple	virgin
	slain	temptation	vision
sabbath	slaughter	Testament	
sacrifice	slave	testimony	wailing
Samaria	slingshot	thee	wherefore
Samaritan	Solomon	thereof	wherewithal
Samuel	sore	thine	whirlwind
Satan	soul	thou	whither
Saul	spear	thy	wisdom
Saviour	spirit	thysself	Wise-men
scepter	staff	Thomas	worship
Scripture	Stephen	tidings	wounded
scroll	strife	token	wrath
Shadrach	swaddling	tomb	
shalt	synagogue	transfigura-	ye
Sheba		tion	
shewing	tabernacle	transgression	Zacchaeus
Shunem	tablets	Tyre	Zion
Silas			







